

### The Department's Hudson Decision

The Report found "no corruption" in connection with the Department of Interior's denial of an application by three Indian tribes to own and operate an off reservation casino at an existing dog track. (Report at 422.) After noting that the evidence showed that Secretary Babbitt "seems to have had no direct involvement in the decision," (*id.* at 439), and played no "meaningful role" in making it, (*id.* at 437-38), the Report states categorically:

A full review of the evidence, however, indicates that neither Bruce Babbitt nor any government official at Interior or the White House entered into any sort of specific and corrupt agreement to influence the outcome of the Hudson casino application in return for campaign contributions to the DNC. The evidence is therefore insufficient to prove that the process and decision in this case were criminally corrupted by the promise of campaign contributions, or any other illicit consideration.

(*Id.* at 441.)

That conclusion by the Independent Counsel, based on her exhaustive twenty-one month investigation, vindicates the probity of the Hudson decision and Secretary Babbitt's unwavering defense of the decision-making process. Indeed, his rock-solid belief in the integrity of the decision, and of the men and women of the Department of Interior who made it, has been at the heart of every statement Secretary Babbitt has made on the Hudson casino issue, including his letters to Senators John McCain and Fred Thompson, his testimony before committees of both Houses of Congress, his statements to the Independent Counsel and her staff and his testimony before the grand jury. As Secretary Babbitt has said repeatedly throughout this long ordeal, the Hudson casino decision was "the right decision made in the right way and for the right reasons." (Babbitt Testimony Before the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight,